

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The USGS- IWSC Encourages Participation for Oct. 4-6 Governor's Conference on Ill. River System Management

The USGS Illinois Water Science Center is one of nearly 40 federal, state, regional and local agencies and groups working together to co-sponsor the tenth biennial Conference on the Management of the Illinois River System. Recognized by Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich as a Governor's Conference, it will be held Oct. 4-6 at the Holiday Inn City Centre in Peoria.

Registration materials are available from the sponsoring agencies and on the Web at <http://www.heartlandwaterresources.com>.

With the theme "The Illinois River: Progress & Promise," the Conference includes presentations on watershed planning, integrated management, nature-based tourism, stewardship, sediment reuse, wetland restoration and monitoring, as well as exhibits from the various organizations and agencies.

Secretary of the Interior Gale A. Norton is invited as the keynote speaker at the noon luncheon on Oct. 5. Chad Pregracke, internationally-recognized river cleanup organizer, will speak at the closing luncheon on Oct. 6.

The gathering is designed to bring together concerned citizens, agricultural, conservation and environmental organizations, industry and government representatives, educators and resource management professionals. Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn, who chairs the Illinois River Coordinating Council, will moderate an evening session on Oct. 4 that will be free and open for public discussion following a meeting of the Council.

At the opening session on Oct. 5, directors of the various state departments and federal agency heads will elaborate on their focus and vision for the Illinois River System.

Concurrent sessions during the conference allow attendees to select topics and speakers of greatest interest to them, while also taking advantage of networking opportunities.

Registration for the three-day conference costs \$125, which includes five meals and a reception. Daily rates are \$85 for Wednesday and \$55 for Thursday. Registrations submitted after Sept. 17 incur a \$20 late fee. Participants will receive a CD compilation of the proceedings of the nine previous conferences.

An all-day conservation tour on Oct. 4 costs an additional \$20 and includes a guided motorcoach tour of river-related sites from Peoria to Hennepin, as well as lunch. Wetland restoration, silt removal, sand and gravel mining, barge loading, streamflow gaging and conservation practices, as well as recreational and historic cultural resources are part of the itinerary.

Further information is available through the Heartland Water Resources Council, 416 Main St., #828, Peoria, IL 61602-1116, phone (309) 637-5253; fax (309) 637-5254; e-mail hwrc@mtco.com or at <http://www.heartlandwaterresources.com>.

7/05